

# Risk Adjustment Coding Academy - Coding Focus

## Lung Cancer



Lung cancer is one of the most common types of cancer among both men and women in the United States, and accounts for about 14% of all new cancer cases. According to the American Cancer Society, one in four cancer-related deaths are caused by lung cancer, which is greater than colon, breast and prostate cancers combined<sup>1</sup>.

### Causes of Lung Cancer

Lung cancer develops when the normal processes of cell division and growth become disrupted, causing abnormal or uncontrollable growth. Cells may then grow into a mass or tumor, which can take several years to develop.

Smoking tobacco and exposure to secondhand smoke is known to be the number one cause of lung cancer; however, it is possible to develop lung cancer without exposure to smoke<sup>2</sup>. Some other causes include prolonged exposure to air pollution, exposure to toxic substances such as asbestos and radon gas<sup>3</sup>, and work place exposure to dust and fumes. In some cases, there may not be a clear cause.

### Types of Lung Cancer

There are two major types of lung cancer: non-small cell and small cell. Non-small cell is the more common type and it usually grows and spreads more slowly than small cell lung cancer. Non-small cell lung cancers are further classified as adenocarcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma or large cell carcinoma. Small cell lung cancer is less common, tends to grow more rapidly and is more likely to be in an advanced stage by the time a diagnosis is made. This type of cancer may also spread more quickly to other parts of the body.

### Symptoms and Treatment

Lung cancer may not cause any symptoms in the earlier stages, but rather symptoms develop as the disease progresses and may include<sup>4</sup>:

- Chronic coughing and hoarseness
- Wheezing or shortness of breath
- Coughing up blood
- Chest pain
- Bone pain
- Unintentional weight loss

The types of treatment options will vary depending on the type and stage of the lung cancer and may include drug, radiation and chemotherapies, surgical interventions or comfort care.

### Coding Guidance

Per coding guidance found in ICD-10-CM chapter 2, if a primary malignancy has been excised but is still receiving treatment, such as radiation or chemotherapy, then the primary

malignancy code should be utilized<sup>5</sup>. When the primary malignancy has been excised and no further treatment is directed to the site, and there is no evidence of any existing primary malignancy, then a code should be utilized from code category Z85 for Personal history of malignant neoplasm (no HCC value). The medical record will need to contain these essential details in order to ensure accurate diagnosis coding.

#### Lung Cancer (HCC 9)

**C34 Malignant neoplasm of bronchus and lung**

- C34.0\* - Main bronchus
- C34.1\* - Upper lobe
- C34.2 - Middle lobe
- C34.3\* - Lower lobe
- C34.8\* - Overlapping sites
- C34.9\* - Unspecified part

\* 5<sup>th</sup> character specifies laterality

- .\_0 - Unspecified
- .\_1 - Right

### Resources:

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- <sup>1</sup> American Cancer Society. (n.d.) Key Statistics for Lung Cancer. Retrieved from cancer.org
  - <sup>2</sup> Mayo Clinic. (n.d.) Lung Cancer Causes. Retrieved from mayo.org
  - <sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control. (n.d.) Lung Cancer. Retrieved from cdc.org
  - <sup>4</sup> Mayo Clinic. (n.d.) Lung Cancer Symptoms. Retrieved from mayo.org
  - <sup>5</sup> Schmidt, A., & Patterson, L. (2017). ICD-10 2018 Professional for Physicians. Optuminsight Inc.